VOLUME LXV
Number 10

The CHRISTIAN CENTURY

CHICAGO, ILL.
March 10, 1948

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WHY YOUR "CHRISTIAN CENTURY" COMES IN THIS FORM

This isn't the kind of March 10 issue of The Christian Century we had planned to send you. The issue we had planned is in the usual 32-page form. It is all set in type and all but six or seven of its pages are ready to be printed. But it cannot be printed, for The Century has been caught in the middle of one of the most obscure and baffling industrial disputes we ever heard about. That, however, does not alter the fact that work stopped in the Chicago unionized printing plant where The Century is produced on Tuesday, March 2, and this is the best means available to us to tell you what has happened.

Here's the story: Contracts for the International Typographical Union, Local 16 (the Chicago local), expired recently. The contract covering printers in the newspaper plants expired in November. Negotiations broke down and the men struck. They are still on strike, and there is no settlement in sight. Because only the typographers--not the pressmen or the engravers or the mailers--are on strike, the newspapers, by using a sort of composite typewriting-and-engraving process, have been able to continue to publish.

The union contract in the commercial plants expired Dec. 31. Because the union already had 1500 men on strike from the newspaper plants, paying them strike benefits of $60 a week, it was in no hurry to call another strike. But conversations with the employers dragged along and dragged along, with threats of a strike growing. About two weeks ago the national ITU voted to increase the dues of every union printer in the United States to 10% of his pay, with 5% going to the union's strike fund. It had been ¼ of 1% before that. After that vote, which has been estimated to supply the ITU with a strike fund of $1,000,000 a month, things moved fast. Mr. Randolph, national president of the ITU, warned a meeting of the Franklin Association (the employing printers' organization) that if they did not meet union demands, the unions would "produce more chaos in your industry than you ever heard of." Well, this is it.

What is the issue? It is not wages; not hours: not collective bargaining; not the right to organize. It is an obscure legal issue, growing out of certain provisions of the Taft-Hartley law. That law forbids union contracts calling for a closed shop. The employers insist they must have a contract, otherwise they will never know what wages are going to be for how long, and so will have no way of estimating their costs. The ITU says, "No contract, for we mean to keep the closed shop."

The employers say they have nothing against a closed shop; that they prefer a closed shop. But the law forbids it. Should they be asked to wink at a violation of the law? Perish the thought! But, they say to the union, the law provides for a union shop, and the only difference between a closed shop and a union shop is that in a closed shop any man hired to work must be a union man when he is hired, while in a union shop any man hired to work must join the union within 60 days. "Why not agree to negotiate for a contract that will require us to maintain a union shop," the employers ask the union, "and then go to work on Congress to amend the law at that point? Why take your opposition to the law out on us by asking us to do something illegal?" To which the union answer is that it has fought for years to establish the principle of the closed shop, and it does not intend to surrender that principle even for an instant.

This seems to us the sort of issue that should be settled by some sort of resort either to the courts or to a tribunal like the NLRB. A lot of confused jockeying in the courts and before the NLRB is, as a matter of fact, going on. But all hands show every intention of postponing any decisive verdict until the November election is safely past. The result is this strike, which is rapidly spreading through the larger union printing

plants in Chicago, and which has already completely tied up many of the larger plants, including that in which The Century is produced.

What should a paper like The Christian Century do in a case of this kind? We do not want to take our work away from a printing company which has given us exceptionally fine service. We believe too deeply in the principles of trade unionism to go to an open shop plant, and we don't want to be put in a position where we seem to be undermining ITU Local 16. So, after exploring all the possibilities that have seemed to offer any encouragement at all, we have come to this conclusion:

For the time being, we will publish The Christian Century in this weekly newsletter form. We will not be able to say all that we wish to say editorially on developing events in this critical period. We will not be able to print the many important articles that we had scheduled for publication during the next few weeks--some of them articles in the various series under way, like the one telling what is to be discussed at the Amsterdam Conference and the one dealing with the separation of church and state issue; some of them single articles on matters of great moment. We will only be able to give in summary a review of the outstanding news of the Christian world. There probably won't be many book reviews; maybe not any. You'll miss the pungent columns of letters to the editor. It won't be the paper we want to give you. But it will keep you abreast of what's happening--in religion, in politics, in social and economic matters, in church affairs. It will be the best we can do in four typewritten pages. If you have any counsel to give us, please send it along.

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Letters from Daniel A. Poling, Albert E. Barnett, George A. Buttrick and seven others.

V. News of the Christian World

(From the reports of Christian Century staff correspondents)

GENEVA--Back from a visit to Yugoslavia, Robert Tobias reports "complete freedom of worship and belief" in that country. First Secretary Djuric, head of the newly created commission on religious affairs, told him Yugoslavia welcomes aid sent to its churches from abroad. Rumanian church leaders have taken oaths of allegiance to the new republic. The World Council appeals for funds for the reconstruction department, now facing a financial crisis. John R. Mott will make the opening address at Amsterdam.--Paul Bock.

LONDON--Sir Oliver Franks, new ambassador to the U.S., is almost the only male member of his family not in the Congregational ministry. His wife is a Quaker, and at Oxford, where he was a don, both attended the local Quaker meeting. Britain nears a financial crisis, as wage demands embarrass the Labor government's efforts to keep prices steady.--Cecil Northcott.

HAMBURG--Hans Asmussen warns the Evangelical Church in Germany (he heads its council) against "currying favor" with occupation authorities and "overestimating" its influence with them. Four bishops of that church have joined Niemöller in charging that denazification now verges on persecution and revenge. American army chaplains recently conferred at Wiesbaden with leading German churchmen on how to develop better German-American relations, particularly through the education of youth.

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AUSTIN, TEX.--The Episcopal diocese of Texas adopted a study commission's recommendation and voted to continue segregation in social affairs, forget it in worship and business sessions. Protestant ministers of the university neighborhood denied a charge by the Newman (Catholic student) club's chaplain that they were behind the suit filed by a taxpayer to restrain the club from operating a raffle contrary to laws on gambling. The raffle was stopped, the suit withdrawn. As the result of a year's campaign conducted by the Texas council of Methodist women for improved conditions in state prisons, the governor has promised reforms.--Blake Smith, pastor of University Baptist Church, our new correspondent for Texas.

LAKE CHARLES, LA.--Louisiana's churches were for the most part neutral in the bitter campaign which put Earl K. Long, brother of the late Huey, in the governor's chair. Long outpromised Sam Jones, his opponent, in such matters as hard-surfaced roads, old age pensions and welfare and institutional benefits.--Marshall S. Burns, pastor of First Christian Church, our new correspondent for Louisiana.

RICHMOND, VA.--At its annual meeting here, the National Lutheran Council heard that Lutheran World Relief last year sent abroad relief materials worth $2,93[illegible],585. Around 51,000 persons heard the nationally famous religious leaders assembled for the city's annual preaching mission. There were public meetings and radio talks.--F. W. Burnham.

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VI. Current Feature Films

I Know Where I'm Going (British) Comedy in a Hebrides setting; witty, delightful. M,Y
Miller McCoy (MGM) Pugilistic sorrows; sometimes brutal, sometimes maudlin. M,Y
Panic (French) Powerful presentation of the ugliness of mob violence. M
The Prince of Thieves (Col.) Robin Hood in "cinecolor." Amateurish. Y,C

Thiel Rel.

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EDITORIAL

Printer's Strike Spreads

The disputants are still arguing whether it is a strike or a lockout, but all we know is that no work is being done by typesetters on The Christian Century and several hundred other magazines published in Chicago. The number of plants affected increases each day, and the dispute has spread to New York, Philadelphia and other cities. So we continue to do the best we can with this newsletter. How does it impress you? You'll have to admit one thing: Cover-to-cover reading doesn't require so much time!

Universal Military Training

UMT has little chance of passage at the current session of Congress, in spite of noise made in hearings by the American Legion. Other measures increasing the $11 billion military budget have the green light. This vast sum, doubling the amount proposed for foreign aid, gets approval almost without debate.

Southern Revolt

The southern revolt against the Democratic party because of Truman's civil rights proposals is dying down, and will probably disappear before election. But the President's move gives the Republicans the opportunity of a lifetime. They can now pass federal legislation against lynching, poll tax voting, segregation and discrimination and should be held responsible for what Congress does. All southern churchmen do not agree with the governors. See reports on page 295.

Western Union

Four of the five European nations which formed the new alliance are colonial powers. The people who are nurturing the synthetic war scare which is building up in Washington and London advocate an American guarantee to this military pact. They are fundamentally mistaken. Such a guarantee would rob us of all freedom to determine our own policy. It would commit us to the maintenance of the colonial status quo. The House should accept the European Recovery Program which the Senate has passed, and do it soon. The only way to stop Communism is to undercut the economic chaos on which it flourishes. War pacts produce wars, chaos, and more Communism.

Vatican Frightened

The extraordinary efforts which the Vatican is making to get out the Catholic vote in Italy reveals how impassioned are the fears of the hierarchy that Italy will go Communist on April 18. These fears are well grounded. The U.S. is doing its part by sending hundreds of shiploads of food. Meanwhile Congress debates the E.R.P. and the hierarchy's efforts may do more harm than good.

Amsterdam Needs Help

A letter addressed to you through The Christian Century reads in part: "We would like to suggest to your readers that the least, the very least, we here in the United States can do is to see to it that no appointed delegate to Amsterdam is kept at home for lack of funds, which might well happen in the case of delegates from some of the younger churches, and that nothing shall be detracted from the work of the World Assembly of Churches because there is not enough money. The American member churches have agreed to raise $106,800 toward the expense of Amsterdam. Less than half will come from the denominations. For the remainder the American committee must appeal to the local churches and to individuals who believe that God wills this assembly and will use it for the healing of his people." The letter is signed by George A. Buttrick, Harry Emerson Fosdick and Henry K. Sherrill. Checks should go to The World Assembly of Churches Fund, 297 Fourth Ave., New York 10. We urgently endorse this appeal.

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